



National Brownfields Assessment Pilot *Worcester, MA*

Outreach and Special Projects Staff (5101)

Quick Reference Fact Sheet

EPA's Brownfields Economic Redevelopment Initiative is designed to empower States, communities, and other stakeholders in economic redevelopment to work together in a timely manner to prevent, assess, safely clean up, and sustainably reuse brownfields. A brownfield is a site, or portion thereof, that has actual or perceived contamination and an active potential for redevelopment or reuse. Between 1995 and 1996, EPA funded 76 National and Regional Brownfields Assessment Pilots, at up to \$200,000 each, to support creative two-year explorations and demonstrations of brownfields solutions. EPA is funding more than 27 Pilots in 1997. The Pilots are intended to provide EPA, States, Tribes, municipalities, and communities with useful information and strategies as they continue to seek new methods to promote a unified approach to site assessment, environmental cleanup, and redevelopment.

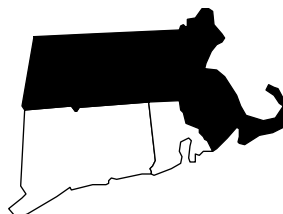
BACKGROUND

EPA selected the City of Worcester for a Brownfields Pilot. Worcester and the 59 surrounding municipalities in Worcester County have been an area of heavy industrial activity since the early 1800s. However, Worcester has lost 30 percent of its manufacturing employment base since 1970, and the entire area has seen dramatic declines as industries have moved away. This migration has resulted in hundreds of acres of often contaminated industrial land and high poverty and unemployment rates in surrounding industrial areas. Nearly 200 sites in the City and 270 sites in the surrounding County have been classified "urban brown ground" (21E) under the State of Massachusetts' Superfund law.

OBJECTIVES

The Worcester Pilot is working on creating incentives for the redevelopment of urban industrial sites and ensuring the safety and health of the surrounding neighborhoods. The project is focusing on returning 21E properties to the economic base, facilitating economic expansion and property tax sharing for area communities, and providing a mechanism and resources for future control and response actions at 21E communities. At least 3 sites will be selected for assessment and redevelopment.

PILOT SNAPSHOT



Worcester, Massachusetts

Date of Award:
June 1996

Amount: \$200,000

Site Profile: The Pilot targets at least 3 sites for assessment and redevelopment out of the nearly 200 former industrial sites in Worcester that have been designated as "urban brown ground" by the State of Massachusetts.

Contacts:

Chris Pierpan
Central Massachusetts
Economic Development
Authority
(508) 799-1400

Lynne Jennings
U.S. EPA - Region 1
(617) 573-9634
jennings.lynne@
epamail.epa.gov

Visit the EPA Brownfields Website at:
<http://www.epa.gov/brownfields>

ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND ACTIVITIES

The Pilot has:

- Presented a packet of educational information regarding brownfields redevelopment at the annual Massachusetts Municipal Association Conference and to the nearby Towns of Auburn and Boylston.

The Pilot is:

- Defining procedures and protocols for the identification, analysis, selection, acquisition, and disposition of sites;
- Developing a public input mechanism and process through the formation of the Central Massachusetts Brownfields Advisory Council; and
- Preparing a process manual as a model for other communities.

LEVERAGING OTHER ACTIVITIES

Experience with the Worcester Pilot has been the catalyst for related activities including the following.

- Established the Central Massachusetts Redevelopment Authority (CMEDA) through State legislation to redevelop three sites.
- CMEDA has partnered with the Massachusetts Development Finance Agency, the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection and the City of Grafton and has raised \$90,000 to perform an environmental assessment on the Fisherville Mill site in Grafton.
- Investigating and developing alternatives for financing site redevelopment.